

mistake is manifest enough from the description of it, which Mr. Parkinson sets down in his *Herbal*, Tribe XI. Chap. 2. *Phasiolus siliqua hirsuta*; The hairy Kidney-bean, called in Zuratte where it grows, *Couhage*: We have had (says he) another of this kind brought us out of the East-Indies, which being planted, was in shew like the former, but came not to perfection, the unkindly season not suffering it to shew the flower; but of the Cods that were brought, some were smaller, shorter, and rounder then the Garden kind; others much longer, and many growing together, as it were in clusters, and cover'd all over with a brown short hairiness, so fine, that if any of it be rubb'd, or fall on the back of ones hand, or other tender parts of the skin, it will cause a kind of itching, but not strong, nor long induring, but passing quickly away, without either danger or harm; the Beans were smaller then ordinary, and of a black shining colour.

Having one of these Cods given me by a Sea-Captain, who had frequented those parts, I found it to be a small Cod, about three Inches long, much like a short Cod of French Beans, which had six Beans in it, the whole surface of it was cover'd over with a very thick and shining brown Down or Hair, which was very fine, and for its bigness stiff; taking some of this Down, and rubbing it on the back of my hand, I found very little or no trouble, only I was sensible that several of these little downy parts with rubbing did penetrate, and were sunk, or stuck pretty deep into my skin. After I had thus rubb'd it for a pretty while, I felt very little or no pain, in so much that I doubted, whether it were the true *Couhage*; but whilst I was considering, I found the Down begin to make my hand itch, and in some places to smart again, much like the stinging of a Flea or Gnat, and this continued a pretty while, so that by degrees I found my skin to be swell'd with little red pustules, and to look as if it had been itchie. But suffering it without rubbing or scratching, the itching tickling pain quickly grew languid, and within an hour I felt nothing at all, and the little protuberancies were vanish'd.

The cause of which odd *Phænomenon*, I suppose to be much the same with that of the stinging of a Nettle, for by the *Microscope*, I discover'd this Down to consist of a multitude of small and slender conical bodies, much resembling Needles or Bodkins, such as are represented by A B. C D. E F. of the first Figure of the XVI. *Scheme*; that their ends A A A, were very sharp, and the substance of them stiff and hard, much like the substance of several kinds of Thorns and crooks growing on Trees. And though they appear'd very cleer and transparent, yet I could not perceive whether they were hollow or not, but to me they appear'd like solid transparent bodies, without any cavity in them; whether, though they might not be a kind of Cane, fill'd with some transparent liquor which was hardned (because the Cod which I had was very dry) I was not able to examine.

Now, being such stiff, sharp bodies, it is easie to conceive, how with rubbing they might easily be thrust into the tender parts of the skin, and there, by reason of their exceeding fineness and driness, not create any considerable trouble or pain, till by remaining in those places moistned with the humours of the body, some caustick part sticking on them, or

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residing within them might be dissolv'd and mix'd with the ambient juices of that place, and thereby those fibres and tender parts adjoining become affected, and as it were corroded by it; whence, while that action lasts, the pains created are pretty sharp and pungent, though small, which is the essential property of an itching one.

That the pain also caused by the stinging of a Flea, a Gnat, a Flie, a Wasp, and the like, proceeds much from the very same cause, I elsewhere in their proper places endeavour to manifest. The stinging also of shred Horf-hair, which in meriment is often strew'd between the sheets of a Bed, seems to proceed from the same cause.

Observ. XXVII. Of the Beard of a wilde Oat, and the use that may be made of it for exhibiting always to the Eye the temperature of the Air, as to driness and moisture.

THIS Beard of a wild Oat, is a body of a very curious structure, though to the naked Eye it appears very slight, and inconsiderable, it being only a small black or brown Beard or Bristle, which grows out of the side of the inner Husk that covers the Grain of a wild Oat; the whole length of it, when put in Water, so that it may extend it self to its full length, is not above an Inch and a half, and for the most part somewhat shorter, but when the Grain is ripe, and very dry, which is usually in the Moneths of July, and August, this Beard is bent somewhat below the middle, namely, about  $\frac{2}{3}$  from the bottom of it, almost to a right Angle, and the under part of it is wreath'd like a With; the substance of it is very brittle when dry, and it will very easily be broken from the husk on which it grows.

If you take one of these Grains, and wet the Beard in Water, you will presently see the small bended top to turn and move round, as if it were sensible; and by degrees, if it be continued wet enough, the joint or knee will streighten it self; and if it be suffer'd to dry again, it will by degrees move round another way, and at length bend again into its former posture.

If it be view'd with an ordinary single *Microscope*, it will appear like a small wreath'd Sprig, with two clefts; and if wet as before, and then look'd on with this *Microscope*, it will appear to unwreath it self, and by degrees, to streighten its knee, and the two clefts will become streight, and almost on opposite sides of the small cylindrical body.

If it be continued to be look'd a little longer with a *Microscope*, it will within a little while begin to wreath it self again, and soon after return to its former posture, bending it self again neer the middle, into a kind of knee or angle.

Several of those bodies I examin'd with larger *Microscopes*, and there found them much of the make of those two long wreath'd cylinders delineated in the second Figure of the 15. *Scheme*, which two cylinders re-

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